Scrapping of PESB's recommended panel

@*344. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of occasions on which PESB's recommended panel had been scrapped for reasons other than vigilance/corruption since formation of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) in 1987; and

(b) the details thereof, year-wise and unit-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) and (b) The information on the number of occasions on which PESB's recommended panel had been scrapped since 1987, is not maintained centrally. However, the information in respect of penals since the year 2004, has been compiled and is given below:

Year	No. of Penals Recommended by PESB	No. of Penals scrapped for reasons other than vigilance clearance
2004	112	1
2005	158	6
2006	130	4
2007 (till 24.4.2007)	34	4

Joint declaration at SAARC Summit

*345. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the joint declaration issued after the conclusion of the SAARC Summit held in New Delhi, recently; and

(b) to what extent, it is expected to improve bilateral relations between India and Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The 14th SAARC Summit held in New Delhi on

@ Previous Starred Question No. 304 transferred from 20.3.07.

April 3-4, 2007 adopted a comprehensive and a forward-looking Declaration, to promote regional co-operation. It underlined the collective vision of the Heads of State/Government of SAARC countries of an interconnected South Asia where there was a free flow of people, goods, services and ideas. Based on the region's common history, geography and socio-cultural ties, it reiterated that the future of the people of South Asia was interlinked. When implemented, the decisions outlined in the Declaration will boost intra-regional trade and investment, enhance understanding through increased people-to-people contact and promote cultural exchanges and travel within the region.

2. The salient features of the Declaration of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Heads of State or Government adopted at the New Delhi SAARC Summit are:

- In its third decade of existence, there was a need to move SAARC from a declaratory to an implementation phase. The focus of SAARC should be on implementing collaborative projects that would bring concrete benefits to the people of the region. In this context, SAARC countries committed themselves to early operationalisation of the SAARC Development Fund (SDF).
- It was agreed to improve intra-regional connectivity, particularly physical, economic and people-to-people connectivity.
- The full benefits of an integrated regional multi-modal transport system were recognised. It was agreed that the SAARC Regional Multimodal Transport Study would be extended to Afghanisthan. It was also agreed that pilot projects for improving connectivity be identified and implemented.
- The signing of two important Agreements on the establishment of the South Asian University and the SAARC Food Bank was welcomed.
- The SAARC countries agreed to work together on a roadmap, *inter alia,* in the fields of poverty alleviation, food security, energy, water, environment, climate change, trade and transport, information and communication technology, tourism, education, culture and counter-terrorism.
- The Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) should be implemented in letter and spirit. To realise its full potential, SAFTA

should integrate trade in services. The importance of implementing trade facilitation measures was also underlined.

- The importance of people-to-people contact as a key constituent in regional connectivity was stressed.
- The SAARC countries committed themselves to combat terrorism and agreed to consider India's proposal to work towards finalizing an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

3. Bilateral and contentious issues are explicitly excluded by the SAARC Charter from SAARC's deliberations. Implementation of the Declaration will considerably upgrade regional cooperation and positively impact on the climate of relations in the subcontinent as a whole.

Vijaywada-Ranchi NH in Orissa

*346. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the status of Vijayawada-Ranchi Highway Project which passes through Orissa;

(b) whether Government are aware that this project passes through 12 tribal dominated districts of Orissa and on completion, it would open up opportunities for a large number of tribals to improve their economy; and

(c) if so, what is the time-frame within which it would be taken up and completed?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Vijayawada-Ranchi route comprising the National Highways and the State roads, having a total length of about 1652 km, traverse through the States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Jharkhand with lengths of about 236 km., 1219 & 197 Km. respectively. This Ministry is primarily responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways. In Orissa, this route having a length of 1219 Km. comprising 239 Km. stretches of different National Highways and 980 Km. length of State roads, is being developed to two lane NH standards as an integrated project by the Central and the State Government through various funding